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ABSTRACT

Guidelines for the preparation of a distance learning program plan for submission to the Texas Education Agency (TEA) are presented in this document in outline format. Each of the eight topics to be addressed in the plan is described: (1) funding; (2) the operator or agency responsible for program administration; (3) quality factors in content and delivery; (4) policies and procedures pertaining to faculty; (5) policies and practices pertaining to students; (6) course lists; (7) evaluation design; and (8) annual operating reports to the TEA. Forms for listing course offerings and for requesting individual course approval are appended. (MES)

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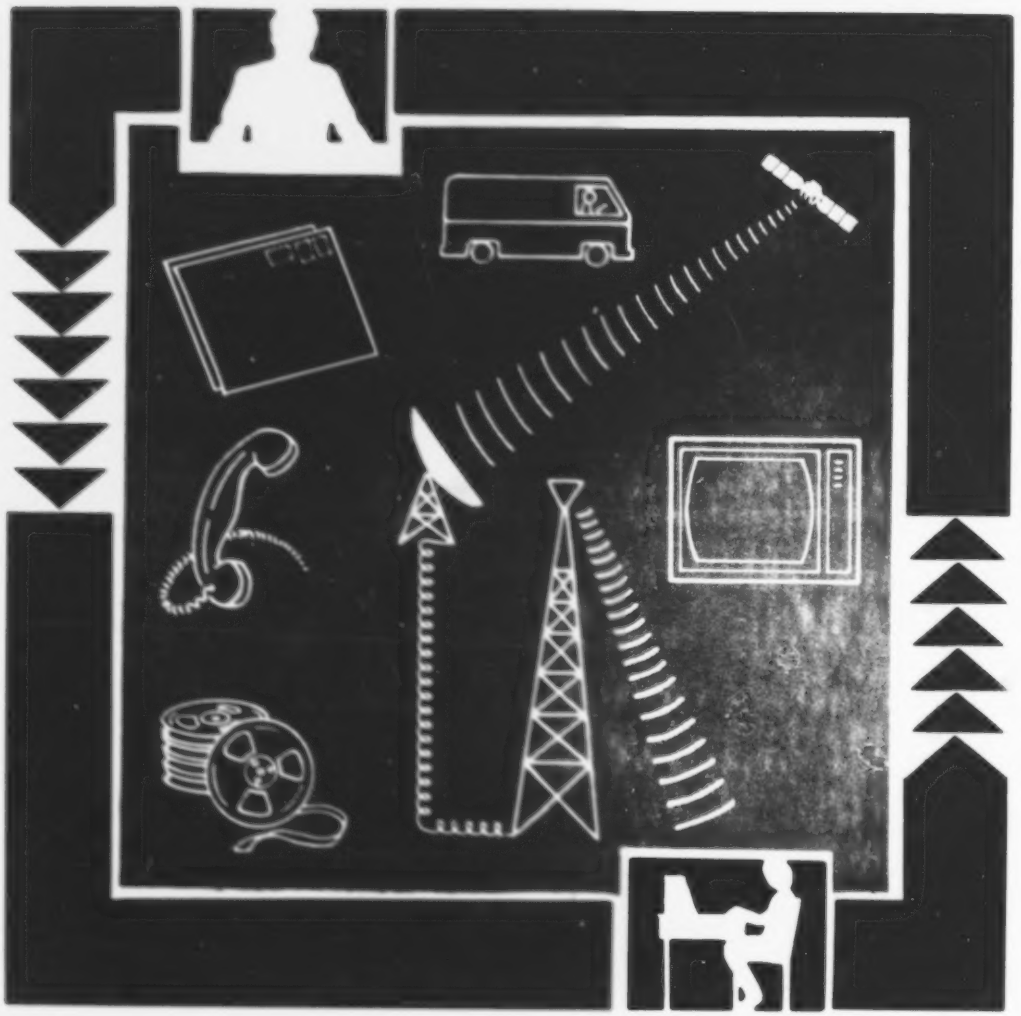
DISTANCE LEARNING PROPOSAL



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TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

Distance Learning Program Plan

TO: Applicants for Distance Learning Program Approval

1. Distance learning program operators must submit a plan for approval by TEA prior to delivering courses for public school credit. User-only agencies do not file this plan for approval.

2. Credit courses delivered primarily by technological means and used as an alternative procedure as defined by Chapter 75, Subchapter G. Other provisions 75.162 are considered to be distance learning courses. These may be delivered by television, other telecommunications, computer or video devices.

3. Before completing a plan, one should review the companion document ***"Guide to Distance Learning As An Alternative Delivery Procedure."***

Contents

A. Funding 1

B. Operator 1

C. Quality factors 1

D. Faculty factors 2

E. Student factors 2

F. Course lists 2

G. Evaluation design 2

H. Annual operating reports to TEA 3

Form #1: List of Course Offerings 4

Form #2: Course Approval Request Form 5

Guide for the Distance Learning Program Plan

Instructions

Applicants! Any group designated as a legal organization, public or private, may submit a distance learning program plan to TEA. Each such program plan must be sponsored by a public school agency. Examples are: accredited public school district, Education Service Center, public college or university or the Texas Education Agency.

Agencies which mean to deliver distance instruction to more than one district should submit a program plan for review to TEA. Only the chief administrative agency (contractor) that will be operating or otherwise providing the distance learning program should submit a plan. Such a plan must be from or cosponsored by an accredited school agency. School districts or other clients which only contract for instructional services from the delivering agency do not submit a plan.

The outline that follows is provided to assist an agency in its preparation of a plan for a distance learning program. Please use a narrative style, follow the sequence of this outline and use the topic headings and numbering. If testimonials or other information about the program must be included in a plan, please include them only as attached appendices.

A. Funding:

Describe how the program will be financed. State the percentage of the total budget that various categories of funding sources comprise. A chart or graph with explanation is acceptable.

B. Operator:

Name the agency responsible for administration of the distance learning program. This should be the agency having overall control of the delivery technology, the course design and system management. It could be a commercial contractor, a public service organization, one district serving many, a service center, a state agency and the like.

If the program is administered by an agency different from the owner or controller of the technology delivery system, name the owner and explain the relationship between administrator and controller of the telecommunications or other delivery system.

C. Quality factors in content and delivery:

Briefly describe your agency's policies and procedures pertaining to distance learning courses as regards:

1. Course materials development
2. Course selection (process for deciding what courses to offer)
3. Course delivery system including as applicable telecommunications capabilities and configurations, mail, etc.
4. Administrative supervision
5. Academic supervision
6. Evaluation of courses and evaluation of delivery system
7. Geographic areas in which you intend to offer telecourses (include any out of state)

D. Faculty factors:

Briefly describe your agency's policies and procedures pertaining to the faculty selected for distance learning course instruction.

1. Recruitment and selection
2. Assignment/course load
3. Orientation of faculty
4. Professional development
5. Evaluation, promotion and compensation
6. Role in the planning, development and delivery of a course.
7. Experience requirements

E. Student factors:

Briefly describe the program policies and practices pertaining to the following:

1. Admission/drops
2. Student-faculty ratios (faculty includes teacher of record and class proctors)
3. Student-faculty interaction
4. Monitoring and assessment of student performance
5. Feedback to students regarding performance
6. Student evaluation of course and faculty
7. Student access to academic support services

F. Course lists:

Provide a list of courses to be offered (use Form #1), and complete a course description for each listed course as per the Form #2. You may be asked to provide supplemental information in addition to that asked for on Form #2. Please make copies of forms as needed. To avoid repetition in responses, certain items on Form #2 (called generic items) have been identified. These may not require written responses for each requested course. Therefore, a reference Form #2 for the generic items should be filed with your program plan. See Form #2, instructions. You may also supply attachments referenced to generic responses.

Once your plan has been approved by the Texas Education Agency, you may use Form #2 to apply for authorization to offer additional courses for credit. Each course must be approved by TEA prior to its delivery to students.

G. Evaluation Design:

Briefly describe the program policies and practices for self-evaluation of the:

1. delivery system (technology and communications)
2. personnel
3. course quality (instructional design and content quality)
4. student management system (including student support, proctor duties, access to resources, communications/contacts)
5. student evaluation system (monitoring, testing, tracking, feedback)
6. administrative and management system
7. relationships with user schools

H. Annual operating reports to the TEA:

Each agency offering distance learning courses for public school credit must annually submit a report of operating revenues and expenditures for its programs beginning from the date of its first course offering and continuing for five years. The annual report should include, but not necessarily be limited to, the following information:

1. total number of courses offered
2. total contact hours
3. total enrollment in each course at the end of each semester and summer session: referenced to enrollments in each served district

FORM #1

Agency/Institution: _____

Contact person: _____

List of Distance Learning Course Offerings

Chapter 75 Subject Area	Course Name	Semester/ Year Offered	Anticipated Enrollment	Maximum Enrollment
Example 75.61	English IV	Fall/1986	100	200

FORM #2

Distance Learning Program

Individual Course Approval Request

(applies only to credit courses not previously approved to be delivered by this program)

Instructions: Items 1 through 4 should be answered for each course to be delivered by your distance learning program.

Be certain that your filed program plan contains a reference Form #2 which includes generic responses on items 5 through 11. This ensures that TEA has a reference-base for generic items to refer to when reviewing your course approval requests. By filing a reference form, you can avoid having to repeat your responses to certain items for each course.

Items 5 through 11 refer to practices which may be generic to all or most courses in your operation. If the course in question is to be treated the same, in regard to items 5 through 11, as most other courses in your program, then you may leave the item blank. However, if the item is unique to that particular course, then you should respond.

For example, suppose you are requesting approval for a new course in chemistry and filling out a Form #2, item —distribution method to the student site. If you operate an ITFS microwave system to distribute instruction and the course for which you are seeking approval is to be delivered in the same manner as in your other courses, then you would not need to respond to item 5, because you have already indicated your usual method of course delivery on a reference Form #2 which you have included as part of your proposed plan. By leaving an item unmarked on the approval form for the chemistry course, you are assuring TEA that the given course will be distributed to students by television in the same manner as you have previously described in both part C.3 of your plan and as indicated in your reference Form #2 for generic items.

If, however, there is to be some significant difference in the method that you will use to distribute the chemistry course from your other courses, then on the chemistry course request form, you must provide a response appropriate for item five.

Please supplement your course descriptions with the items 3 d-h. This information will be reviewed by content specialists at TEA.

FORM #2

For each course you are requesting to deliver under your approved plan, please complete the following according to instructions. You may circle appropriate letter or word responses where there is no blank.

Applicant/Institution/Agency: _____

Address: _____

Contact person: _____

Phone Number: _____

If this course is new to the public school curriculum, it must also be approved through regular procedures for experimental courses. Such approval must be secured prior to making a request for offering the new course as part of the distance learning program. Prior approval is also required for certain other courses as designated in Chapter 75, i.e., honors, magnet, high school credit for college, correspondence.

1. First school year for which course approval is requested. _____

2. Course Information:
   a. title of course: _____
   b. grade level: _____
   c. prerequisite requirements: _____
   d. maximum proctor-to-student ratio: _____
   e. proposed credit per semester: _____
   f. proposed maximum enrollment per class section: _____ (If this exceeds 25 for courses involving acquisition of skills in second languages (oral proficiency) or 30 for laboratory type courses, please explain in item 11 or by attachment how you will ensure appropriate student activities and individual attention.)

3. a. Course Description: Provide a brief narrative description of this course, mark items b and c and attach requested information as appropriate.
   b. Assurance: We assure that the course will include all essential elements specified for such a course in Chapter 75, **or**
   c. Prior approvals: We assure the course has already been approved by TEA as:

      (circle any that apply and give date of approval and details pertinent to the prior approval)

      c.1. an experimental/Magnet program course _____
      c.2. a correspondence course _____
      c.3. a high-school-credit-for-college course _____
      c.4. an honors course _____
   d. Scope & Sequence: Provide a scope and sequence for the course
   e. Objectives: List examples of the major student objectives for the course
   f. Activities: List example student activities, particularly those involving labs, such as science, art production, languages, vocational courses.
   g. Assessment: Attach a brief description of procedures for student assessment in this course and provide examples of assessment instruments which illustrate your typical assessment criteria.
   h. Instructional Resources: Attach a list of examples of types and titles of the instructional resources which will be required and used with students. Examples are textbooks, audiovisuals, and workbooks. Also list examples of special equipment or supplies if required for the course such as science lab equipment, computer equipment, music instruments, art equipment/materials, vocation equipment, business machines, and language lab devices.

4. Justification: (why is the course needed in the distance learning program and how was this need determined?)

Generic Items: mark or describe as appropriate and only if they differ from the responses to these items on your generic reference Form #2. Please identify all attached descriptions by course title and Chapter 75 code.

5. Message distribution methods to student site (circle all letters as applicable)
   a. television broadcast signals: (UHF/VHF) (ITFS/microwave) (Satellite)
   b. phone line
   c. coax cable: commercial, other. . .(explain)
   d. mail
   e. other methods: (attach description if necessary for clarity)

6. Message delivery methods student-to-instructor (circle each as applicable)
   a. phone
   b. television: (VHF/UHF) (ITFS/Microwave) (Satellite)
   c. coax cable: commercial, other. . .(explain)
   d. mail
   e. other methods: (describe as necessary)
   f. Describe the kinds and approximate frequency of student-faculty interaction required during the term of the course. Interaction in this case means real-time dialogue and delayed-time communications such as mail. Delineate face-to-face contacts versus other types of interactive contacts.

7. Evaluation (describe in less than 25 words each of the following and cite if records are kept, instruments used)
   a. Student evaluations/tests (who evaluates and how)
   b. Proctor evaluation (who will be responsible for grading proctor's work and how)
   c. District support (who is evaluated in terms of district support and how are they evaluated)
   d. Course design (who evaluates, what is the process)
   e. Delivery (what evaluation is done of the delivery system itself?)

8. Student environment: Describe the model for the student environment at the learning site(s). Include such elements as:
   a. technology available to students (tools)
   b. on-hand study resources such as texts, AV for self-study, library access (if library/information base access is to be via telecommunications and other technology, give details and identify the information bases)
   c. provisions to allow each student to make in-person contacts and do group study activities with similarly enrolled students
   d. room design and layout (how will it be arranged to be conducive to student-learning activities in this course?)

9. Teacher criteria (teacher of record)
   a. certified to teach the particular subject and level?
   b. non-certified: indicate special skills required (10 words or less)

(See Reverse)

10. Proctor(s) for this course are: (circle all as appropriate)

    a. certified
    b. non-certified
    c. aide
    d. pretrained for distance learning role (describe in 10 words or less)
    e. untrained
    f. volunteer

11. Describe any exceptions to your plan for distance learning as pertains to the conduct of this proposed course.

Texas Education Agency
Austin, Texas
GE7 301 05

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